

Random Thoughts
by

Geo. F. Farness

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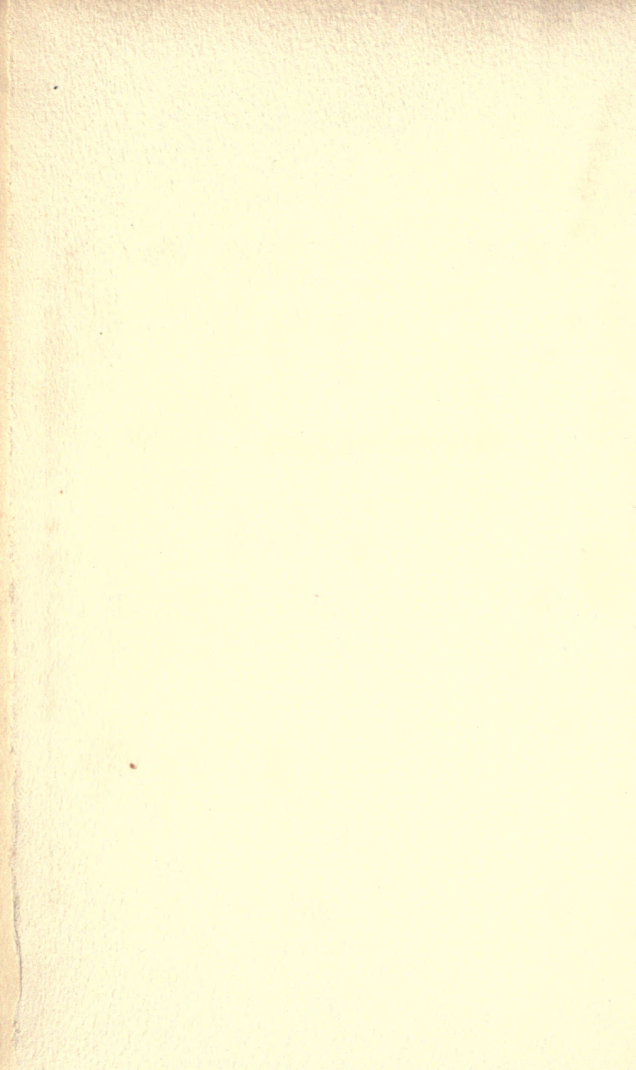
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Christmas and the New Year

from
Mr and Mrs Geo. Inness

1920

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RANDOM THOUGHTS

RANDOM THOUGHTS

BY
GEORGE INNESS, JR.

1920
PRIVATELY PUBLISHED

THIS LITTLE BOOK IS
DEDICATED
TO
MY FRIENDS

(NOTE: Don't show it to the public, if you love me. It's for you and me, to remind us of some things we used to talk about)

Geo. Inness Jr.

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THE AGENTS
IN THE SEA BUREAU
CHRISTMAS COVE. N. H.
FOUNDED BY LARRY CHITTENDEN

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RANDOM THOUGHTS

RANDOM THOUGHTS

BURGLARS

DID you ever hunt a burglar? I have, and I assure you that for a man of my temperament it's no joke. Suppose you had to kill the thing, how would it look? Would the gasping wretch haunt you in after years? Anyway, it would be horrid. I took a revolver on my hunt, but I advise you, when you hunt your burglar, to take the dinner-bell and some convenient glassware. Glass makes a splendid noise when you crash it on the ground. No, don't take a gun. It's dangerous, and when it goes off, your wife is sure you have been killed. And after you have let the burglar out of the front door and have gone upstairs, you find her in a faint. No, don't take a gun; make a noise.

Well, now I will tell you what I did. My

BURGLARS

wife and I were quite young—our first child was only a few months old—when the burglar came. We were living with my wife's parents in Fifty-fourth Street. We occupied the third floor of the house. Father and mother's apartments were on the second floor. Father had gone to Europe, and mother and her maid were all alone. On the burglar night we had all retired very early. I was very tired, and just dropping off to sleep when my wife came to my bed and said:

"Wake up, George. There are burglars in the house." Did you ever awaken at the sound of your wife's voice crying there are burglars in the house? Well, it sort of gets on your nerves. It's as bad as fire, or any of those nasty things that are sure to happen once in a while to jar you.

"Nonsense!" I said. "How do you know there are burglars in the house? You women are always getting frightened at something." Of course I was not frightened; and if I was, I was not going to let my wife know it. So I said, "Go to bed and forget it."

But she persisted, saying that mother had

BURGLARS

listened through the speaking-tube and heard them moving about in the basement and that she also had listened and could hear them distinctly as they moved about in the kitchen.

I got up and said:

“Well, I suppose I must go down and let them out.”

I took a small Colt's revolver out of the bureau drawer, and, arming myself with a lighted candle, started down-stairs. Now, I may have been a little excited. I say I may have been, for I forgot my slippers, and went in my bare feet. I am like the deaf old professor who, when asked at a dinner party by a young lady if he liked bananas, said, “No; I prefer the old-fashioned night-shirt.” And so do I. I never could understand how anybody could sleep in pajamas. They are such restless things! They twist themselves into all sorts of knots, and in the morning you have to scramble all over yourself to find the place to get out of. It's as bad as having your suspenders come loose and slip up the middle of your back, just out of reach from above or below.

BURGLARS

Well, I was in my night-shirt, bare legs and feet, a lighted candle in my left hand and a diminutive revolver in my right; and thus I groped my way down-stairs. I could have lighted the gas, but—well, I did n't; my mind was preoccupied. Now, when I started down-stairs, I knew just where the burglars were. They were in the basement,—my wife said they were,—but I thought it would be just as well to linger on the first floor a bit. Who knows—so I went into the drawing-room. I knew they were n't there, but I placed the candle on a small table, got down on my hands and knees, and looked under the sofa. No one there. A sigh of relief escaped me; but of course I did not expect them to be there under the sofa. I knew they were in the basement. Why not go down immediately and have the thing over? But now that I was on the first floor, it would be silly not to see if they were in the dining-room; so I took up the candle and went slowly into the dining-room.

What was that? Something surely took hold of the tail of my shirt. Of course I was not frightened, but I thought it strange.

BURGLARS

I gave a start of surprise and almost pulled the trigger of my revolver. I sat down in a chair for a minute or two; I wanted to think the matter over. Of course no burglar pulled the tail of my night-shirt, and, besides, the burglars were in the basement. I really heard them creeping about. My robe must have caught in the door as I was passing through. That was a queer noise in the basement; it was in the kitchen. I wished the noise would stop; but I would go down and corner them. I wondered how many there were. Probably not more than one. The other would be watching outside. How stupid they must be! Could n't they see my light and know I was after them? If they had any brains, they would see they were discovered, and leave the house. I had a good mind to tell them, "I spy," and let the poor trapped devils have a chance of escape. But, then, what explanation could I make to my wife? Of course she would not understand my feelings of pity. Do you suppose she would think I was afraid? Of course not; how could she? I was her husband, her protector.

BURGLARS

What can the burglars get out of the kitchen, anyhow? Maybe a bit of cold chicken or a ham bone out of the ice-box. Maybe they are hungry. I'll let them finish their meal, and then they will leave. They can't do any real harm; I am here with my revolver, and they can't harm any one in the house without coming up-stairs. I am guarding the stairs. Say, if I stay here much longer, Julia 'll be down to see what has become of me. I know her.

Well, here goes, Mr. Burglar; it's either you or I this time, I will go right to the kitchen door and shout, "Hands up!" No, I won't shout; I'll say very coolly and deliberately, "Hands up, gentlemen!"

I am now at the kitchen door. I cautiously look in. Sometimes I wonder why I did not think of putting out the light. But, as I said before, my mind was preoccupied. I looked into the kitchen; nobody there. Ah, a feeling of relief! But why should I have a feeling of relief? They are breaking the law; why should I be so anxious for their escape? Heavens! there they are in the closet! They

BURGLARS

heard me coming, and have hidden in the closet.

I approach the door; I place the candle on a chair, grasp the knob of the door in my left hand, jerk it open suddenly, thrust my revolver in with my other hand—nobody there. I sink down in the chair. Why, my knees are shaking! Why should I get so excited over these wretches? They don't deserve any quarter; and if I should see them now, I'd just shoot them full of holes. Good Lord! the billiard-room! It's in the front basement. They heard me, and have taken refuge in the billiard-room. I'll get them yet.

Now I'm in the billiard-room. There, in the closet! I can hear them breathe. I steal cautiously to the door, I place a chair on which I put the candle. I feel a blast of cold air on my bare legs. I repeat, as in the kitchen, I pull the door open, thrust the little revolver in the closet. I hear a female voice laughing behind me, and a male voice say, "Why does n't the fool put out his light?" I turn with a start to see two ladies and a gentleman leaning on the front railing, peering into

BURGLARS

the window, which has been left open, with the shade up, so that the milkman can put the baby's milk through the iron bars. I blow out the light, rush into the kitchen, and turn off the water that has been drip, drip, dripping into the sink, and rush up-stairs.

Julia is at the banister and says:

"Were there any?"

I retort:

"What time is it? Twelve o'clock. Just coming home from the theater."

THE SUICIDE

THE day was hot—one of those early spring days that make one feel limp. I went to my studio in Carnegie Hall, on Fifty-seventh Street, but I could not work. Nothing looked good to me that morning. I seemed to feel afraid of something; something was going to happen, something tragic. I felt that I was going to receive some shock that would change my whole life. How stupid! I would have no more of it. I would get to work and throw off this unhealthy feeling. I had the blues, but why? There was nothing to worry about; everything was going along smoothly in my affairs.

It was no use. I could not work. I would take a walk in Central Park; it was only two blocks away. I would have a stroll. It would clear my brain of this terrible dread that was haunting me. If I could only give it shape, I could handle the matter

THE SUICIDE

and throw it off, this terrible dread. I was afraid to open the door for fear I should see it in the hall. What should I see in the hall? That was it, what? Good God! what is the matter with me? Am I going mad? I must buck up. I must open the door. I did.

Slowly at first, just a crack, then I suddenly jerked it wide open. It was the same hall. I knew it very well; it looked just as it had always looked—but what was that? Some one walking behind me. I turned around nervously; nobody there. I was alone, but surely I heard a footstep. Let me get out; let me get out quickly.

With a few swift steps that were really a run I reached the elevator. I pushed the button. Would the thing never come up? Ah, there it comes. I hear the door clang to; I see the cables moving. What a relief! There was something tangible. I could see it. I could understand it. Even if it had suddenly dropped to the bottom of its long shaft, or had blown up, I could understand it; I could feel, see, touch it. Then appeared

THE SUICIDE

Joe's shining black face as he took me in, and we descended to the street, where everything was normal.

Taxicabs were buzzing about; people were on the pavement as usual; everything was correct; things were moving just as they ought to move. A big sight-seeing car came along; a man stood in the middle of the crowd of "rubbers"—I think that's what they're called—and shouted at the top of his lungs: "Carnegie Hall, built by Mr. Andrew Carnegie, the great iron master, whose wealth is estimated at ——" Yes, everything was normal; the world was moving just as it had been moving. No one was shouting, "Extra, extra"; nothing had happened. Everything and everybody seemed at peace. I was myself again. I wondered what had been the matter with me—an attack of indigestion? I bet it was that lobster I ate last night. Well, I was all right now, but I would go to the park. Yes, I'd go to the old arsenal and look at that solemn old crane that stands on one leg, and I'd watch that old pelican until he yawned. You know it's a great sight to

THE SUICIDE

see a pelican yawn. No, I don't think I'll visit the lion house. I don't think on this stuffy day that I could endure the odor. What a queer day it is! Everything is muggy; the sun shows like a red spot through the mist. It's not a fog; no, just a hot, murky, enervating spring morning in New York.

I am tired. I'll sit on this bench and rest awhile. I wonder what that man on the bench a little farther down is thinking about. Why do you suppose he's sitting all alone on that bench? I'd like to ask him; but, no, he might be offended. I'd better attend to my own business. Maybe he is wondering why I sit all alone on my bench. What would he think if he knew what had driven me out of my studio—quit that, now! I must not get on that subject again. I'll make a mental picture of the man. Who is he? What is he? Well, never mind who he is, what he is. He is about fifty years of age, shabby, genteel, clerical-looking; but he is not a preacher. He's a bachelor; he's never succeeded in anything; he never has been able to hold a position; he has no small vices; he does not drink;

THE SUICIDE

he does not use tobacco or bad language. He's very nice to children; he's errand boy to his sister, who keeps a boarding-house. She has sent him to the park to get him out of the way. It's house-cleaning day, and a man's always in the way. I wonder why he sits so still. There, now, he moves his foot; he's making marks with the toe of his shoe in the gravel. The shoe is cracked open on one side. It is a congress gaiter. I have not seen one in years; the elastic on the side is worn out, is all in threads. How thin he is! His coat is too short in the sleeves, and a long, thin arm shows beneath it. He has no cuffs—ah, now he's going to do something! He's reaching for the pocket in the tail of his long clerical coat that's turning brown around the collar. His hat is a derby; the brim looks greasy and there's a dent in one side of it. He has taken out of his pocket a pair of black kid gloves and he is putting them on. Now, what in the world is he putting those black kid gloves on for, and on such a day as this? The gloves are not new. I can see two fingers sticking through. Now he seems to

THE SUICIDE

be mumbling something, and he is nodding his head; he does n't look right to me. Now what is he going to do? The man's getting on my nerves. I'll move on. He is of no interest to me. I'll go and watch the pelican.

I get up from my bench and walk past him, and as I pass I look at his face—such a poor, little, miserable, drawn face without any chin! He does not seem to see me; his eyes are gazing off into the distance. But I can see the eyes; they are terrible; they look like death. I pass, but I can go no farther. I must go back. I have lost my will. I am fascinated. I must go back and watch that man. I feel a shudder when I think of what he might do. I think I will find a policeman and ask him to watch the man. How lovely the park seems! There is not a soul in sight; only the man on his bench and I on mine. God help me! what shall I do? He has risen and is walking, or rather shuffling, for he drags one foot along as though it had no life—shuffling toward the low iron fence. He climbs over the fence and walks on the forbidden grass. I

THE SUICIDE

spring to my feet. A feeling of horror is creeping over me.

The man takes from his coat-tail pocket a white handkerchief. He spreads it on the grass beside him. Good God! he has drawn from his breast pocket a long case-knife! He drops to his knees, and as he kneels there in the grass I cover my eyes with my hands. I cannot look. I want to shriek, but I cannot make a sound. Great drops of sweat are pouring from my forehead.

After a struggle I force myself to open my eyes. I find he has already gathered a number of dandelions.

FRANK WORTHY AND THE CIRCUS

FRANK WORTHY, aged eight, had to work for everything he got, and he did chores about the house. He carried water, chopped wood, fed the chickens, and was a general man around the place. For his work he was paid two cents a day, and with his money he bought all his toys. His last purchase was a pair of pigeons that cost him fifty cents, and he found himself quite short of funds just at the time the circus came to town.

Frank's parents were good, worthy people who believed that if a boy did not work for his pleasures he should go without them; so when the big circus came to town, Frank had just twenty cents, and a half-ticket for boys of his age cost twenty-five cents.

Poor little Frank was in despair. He applied to his mother for an advance of five cents; but she refused, saying, if he had not spent his money foolishly, he would have enough to pay for the circus. Poor Frank! What should he do? He must see that circus.

FRANK WORTHY AND THE CIRCUS

All his friends were going; things were looking bad for him. When he strode down to the field where the men were putting up the big tent and the benches, all the animals were standing around: horses with white spots on them; and huge elephants swaying from side to side, and reaching out their long trunks to every looker-on, hoping for a peanut to be given to them; and the lions in their cages were roaring in a manner that gave Frank the creeps when he thought what would happen if they should break through those iron bars. Frank loved to watch the elephants, but felt much safer at a distance from the long-reaching trunks. There was going to be a big parade through the streets as soon as the tent was up. Poor Frank! Well, he'd see the parade; but, oh, how he did long to see the big show inside that tent! Something must be done. Surely there must be a way to get a ticket.

While Frank was pondering thus, he saw a giant of a man carrying buckets of water to the animals. Frank approached the man and said:

FRANK WORTHY AND THE CIRCUS

"Can't I do something to earn five cents? I've got twenty cents; but it costs twenty-five to see the circus, and I want to see it awfully."

The big man said:

"Why, Sonny, you'll have to see the boss. There he stands, over there."

So Frank went up to a man in high-topped boots, with a long whip in his hand, and said:

"Please, Mister, won't you give me a job, so's I can earn five cents? I've got twenty, but it takes twenty-five for a boy's ticket, and I want to see the show."

The man in the top-boots looked down on Frank with a kindly smile and said:

"Well, my man, what can you do?"

"'Most anything," said Frank. "I could help that man carry water."

"Well, let me see, I guess I'll take you on. If you'll lug water for them elephants till the parade begins, I'll give you five cents."

Frank was saved. Oh, joy! he was going to see the great show after all!

"Oh, yes," said Frank, "I'll carry all the

FRANK WORTHY AND THE CIRCUS

water they can drink." The man in the top-boots laughed and replied:

"Well, young one, I guess you 'd be at it some time before you 'd satisfy Miss Lucy over there; she can hold a powerful lot, she can. But run along, and take that littlest pail over to the pump across the fence, and do the best you can."

Frank was a very husky lad for his age, and he had been used to carrying big loads, so he went to work manfully, and though he could not carry much in the pail at one time, he accomplishing a good deal in many trips from the pump in Sam Taylor's yard to the big tub near where the elephants were chained by the foot. Frank was pretty tired when the man in the top-boots came up and gave him five cents as he said:

"There, that will do. I guess you 've earnt the money. You keep right on doing work, and I guess you will be able to take care of yourself, and I 'll bet you 'll enjoy the show more 'n any other boy in the place. So long, Sonny. The show begins at four o'clock sharp. Don't lose your money."

FRANK WORTHY AND THE CIRCUS

Frank was happy, but tired, ah, so tired! and, oh, so happy! The parade was wonderful to see. First came a band of music with a big bass-drum, then some monkeys riding on the littlest pony you ever saw. The monkeys were tied on, and wagged their heads, with their red caps, and blinked their little eyes at Frank, as much as to say: "You're all right. I saw you working for the greatest show on earth; you're all right." Then came some beautiful ladies and gentlemen riding magnificent horses that curved their necks and pranced as though they were the whole show. Then there was a float with great feathers and streamers on it, and more beautiful ladies sitting on the top, and in the middle a little boy perched on a high stand. He was dressed in spangles of gold and silver, and he held in his hand a long wand that he waved from side to side. The next was the lion cage. It was decorated with gold, with fancy work all over it. Behind it came the four big elephants, solemnly trudging along, swaying their trunks as they came; and on the head of each sat a man all dressed up in a scarlet coat. They

FRANK WORTHY AND THE CIRCUS

had big spears that they poked into the elephants to make them step lively. Following the elephants, came a clown. His face was pure white, with red spots on it. He had on a white pointed hat, and white clothes that looked like Frank's night-drawers; but they were all speckled with black spots, and had a ruffle around the ankles and cuffs and collar. He rode a little gray donkey with spots just like his own, and a white pointed hat between his long ears. The clown did all sorts of funny things on the donkey's back, and beat him with a stick, and yelled to the crowd on the sidewalk, "Come on to the greatest show on earth!" Frank followed the parade to the big tent, and he and his best friend, Bob Brown, stood on tiptoe as they reached up their twenty-five cents to the man who was selling tickets at the door. It was Frank's friend of the top-boots, but he did not recognize Frank, as he was too busy yelling at the top of his lungs: "Come into the greatest show on earth! Only a few seats left. Now's your chance for a good seat; come right along and bring your friends!" And a man, all

FRANK WORTHY AND THE CIRCUS

spangles, was by his side, pounding a bass-drum, and shouting: "Come right along! Admission fifty cents, children under twelve half-price. Come while there is a chance to get in!"

Frank and Bob were early. They wanted the best seats, where they could see everything at once; so they climbed to the top row. People were coming in pretty fast now, scrambling for the seats; but Frank and Bob were where they could not be disturbed. The band was playing at the top of its lungs, and men were running about shouting: "Peanuts! peanuts! hot roasted peanuts! Lemonade and soda!" Everything was in an uproar. Frank was in an excitement of expectation when something happened. He found himself descending like a shot, and suddenly he landed with a thud on the ground beneath. He had fallen off the seat that had nothing but the wall of the tent to support his back. Frank was not much hurt, but just as he was scrambling to his feet, a big hand was thrust under the tent from outside and grabbed him

FRANK WORTHY AND THE CIRCUS

by the collar of his coat and yanked him outside. He found himself in the clutches of a big man, who boxed his ears, and said:

“You would steal in, would you, you young scoundrel! Take that, and that, and go around to the front and buy a ticket if you want to see the show.”

Poor Frank protested he had bought a ticket, and had fallen off the seat; but to no avail. The man swore at him, and said he would have him locked up if he did not clear out at once. Frank ran crying—for he was, after all, only a little fellow—to the entrance, to tell his friend of the boots how it had happened; but the man was not there. He was ring-master inside, and the show had begun. The man who was at the ticket entrance did not know Frank, and did not believe his story, and told him to buy a ticket or get out. He’d heard that kind of story before, and you could n’t fool him. Poor little Frank sat lonely and broken-hearted outside, while he heard from within the shouts of laughter, the cracking of whips, the clashing of cymbals,

FRANK WORTHY AND THE CIRCUS

and "Peanuts, lemonade, and soda." Frank told the tale, and said it was the most terrible, the most tragic event of his life. He is fifty now.

THE ARTIST

THERE was an artist come up to our mountain once. He were an awful nice feller. He could tell yer stories by the hour. He built him a studio outen an old barn pa said he could have. Pa did n't have no use for it. It was too fur from the house, and there war n't nothin' to put into it, anyway.

How the barn come to be built away out there pa said he never did know, 'cause it were there when his father bought the farm when pa was a boy. I'll bet yer it's nigh on to a hundred year old. She measures twenty-four by thirty-six feet, and the timbers into her is all oak and as big around as you be. They's all hewed, an' if they was sawed up, there'd be enough timber to build three barns.

There ain't nothin' mean about pa, an he'd hev give the barn for nothin', but the artist feller said he'd have to pay for it, an' so pa give him a writin' for five years, and pa says that pays the taxes on the whole farm.

THE ARTIST

You oughter see the studio Mr. Brown (Brown's his name) made outen that old barn. He got George Budd, the carpenter, to fix it up. When 't was done, 't was the finest thing I ever see. The winder in it, I guess, is ten feet square. He's got lots of pretty things in it what he fetched from New York, but why in time he wanted that old spinnin'-wheel we had in the garret I never could see. He gave ma ten dollars for it, and she says she's been ashamed ter look him in the face ever since.

He's got queer ways about him, and ma thinks he's a leetle tetched, for he's bought up all the old broken chairs he could find in the neighborhood. He give Jack Weed three dollars for a' old cradle Jake's chickens was roostin' in. Jake said hens had been roostin' in it 's long as he could remember. An' there Brown has all them fool things a-settin' on the purttest carpets I ever set eyes on. He's got lots o' little carpets all over the floor; and say, he's got some on 'em nailed on the wall. He's got a big fish-net hangin' from the ceilin'. I don't mind them things, if he wants to have

THE ARTIST

'em, but when he finds a pair o' pa's boots in the tool-house that 's been there for more 'n ten year' and is full o' holes an' cobwebs, and wants to pay pa money for 'em, I kinder sides with ma and believe he is a "leetle tetched."

Sometimes I 'd go to the studio in the evenin' and set an' hear Brown talk. Sometimes he 'd make me laugh so 's I 'd almost bust, and sometimes I 'd almost cry. He could make his voice sound any way he wanted it to—loud and soft, an' twist it around just like you was skatin' the figger eight. I used to like to hear him talk. I did n't allers understand what he was a-talkin' about, but he 'd stand up an' thrash his arms about like our minister does. But the minister could n't hold a candle to him, and he says a cuss-word now and again, but it never did sound like swearin' when Brown said it.

He had a big lamp on a tall stand and a refector behind it that 'd throw the light on to his picters, and we set all in the dark with only the light on the picter. When yer take yer eyes off the picter an' look round the big studio, yer get scairt-like. It looks so spooky,

THE ARTIST

with the big fish-net hangin' down, and statues without no bodies a-starin' at yer, and old broke-down chairs that 'd make yer think that some dead feller had sat in 'em, and pa's old boots a-hangin' by a string jest like they was goin' to fall on yer.

The fust night I sat there with Brown he told me a story about a gold bug you had to drop through the eye of a skull to find some treasure; and I got so scairt I had to whistle all the way goin' home, and when I got to our back door and see the light through the winder, I jest run and opened it so quick that ma said, "Scat!" an' jumped clean outen her chair.

One night Brown showed me a picter he 'd painted with old Deacon Thorn's red barn into it. I did n't think much of the picter, 'cause he had the red barn painted almost blue. I told him the barn was red, an' he had it blue. I knowed it was red, 'cause I helped Deacon Thorn paint it. We was three days doing it, and he give me three dollars. Brown said if I 'd look at the barn right, I 'd see it war n't so red 's I thought it was.

THE ARTIST

“You see,” said Brown, “when you see a thing that ’s away off in the distance, it don’t look like it does close to. That ’s art,” says he, “and art ’s the most beautiful thing in life,” says he. “Art ain’t only in picters, it ’s in everything we do and everything we say and everything we see. Only we ’ve got to learn to do an’ say an’ see it right. You know the barn is red ’cause you painted it red, and you got it all over your hands and face and clothes. But now you ’re away from it you see it through the atmosphere that makes the color soft; and when you look at the barn and see it in the distance, with all the beautiful fields and flowers and birds that lay ’twixt you and it, you forget the hot, red pesky thing that made you sweat, and see it blue. And it ’s jest so in life. When you run ag’in’ a thing that ’s botherin’ yer and makes yer cuss, jest back away till it fades in the distance an’ put an atmosphere ’twixt it and you of thoughts of things that ’s good and beautiful and pure, and when you turn to look again at the pesky thing, you ’ll find it ain’t so red and pesky after all, but has almost turned to blue.”

THE GRAND CAÑON

WE left the train at Williams and took a four-horse wagon that brought us through the Arizona plains and woods of pine. Just before we came out into the open, we descended from the stage and walked. My wife and I went hand in hand and pushed our way through underbrush until we came right on the rim. There we stood and uttered not a sound. With a great lump rising in my throat, I stifled down a sob and turned, to see my wife was crying. Still without a sound we stood and gripped each other's hands and gazed out over a great sea of rocks and buttes that seemed to float upon the purple atmosphere below, as rays of light, shot out from the lowered sun, danced upon their crests, and made them shine like all the jewels in the gates of paradise.

Two hundred miles of titan chasm yawns in frightful beauty, and down and down, a mile

THE GRAND CAÑON

deep, the raging river dashes spray upon the huge black granite rocks that form its sides and tower up one thousand feet above it. From where we stand we can see the raging, tumbling torrent stretching like a tiny silver thread as it winds in and out, and here and there it is lost in purple mystery that lifts the sun-tipped castle-towers high up amid the heavens.

Not an atom of life is seen among this world of towers, minarets, and spires of Gothic form, among battlemented castles somber black against the sky, and terraced gardens leading up to palaces with marble colonnades and sculptured tracery as delicate as lace, all bathed in colors like the rainbow hues. Through this vast, wild, rampant world of beauty you seem to see, as it were, an ancient city with fair ladies and brave men, and right in front, in silhouette, you seem to see the grim, black, forbidding agencies of war, whose gigantic arms spread out a menace to all that would molest the wondrous city that they guard.

On that night a fearful storm hung over

THE GRAND CAÑON

the Bright-Angel Trail and lashed the twisted pine-trees to the ground. Thunder, peal on peal, rolled through the mighty gorge and clashed against the buttes, rolling from peak to peak with deafening roar that seemed to split and rend all the earth. A dozen fires thrust out their forked tongues and licked with sickening flame the domes and towers of that mighty city in the clouds; then rushed on, mad with fury, as they dashed along with screeching gale that hurled tons of sand at minaret and battlement and was swallowed up in one great thunder crash that rent the very heavens, gathered up the storm, and with a rumbling growl of triumph hurled it far out upon the plain.

As the moon peeked out we saw the grim sentinels still guarding the enchanted city that looked as though it did not know the fearful thing had been, so still it floated in the sky, bathed in the silver light.

BERRY'S STORY

Before we left the cañon we spent a night at "Grand View" on Berry's trail. As we sat

THE GRAND CAÑON

in the long-walled cabin, Gus Buck, a member of our party, turned to Berry, a tall, stalwart, blue-eyed cow-boy, with cartridge-belt and gun, who sat with tilted chair against the wall, and asked him which was the toughest town in Arizona. Berry drawled he guessed that Williams was, but Gus, intent on drawing Berry out, declared *he* thought that Flagstaff was the tougher of the two. But Berry stuck to Williams, and told without a gesture or raising his voice the story of his brother's death. As he drawled it out, the monotony of his voice got on our nerves, and we listened with bated breath while he said:

"Brother and me run a faro-bank down to Williams some years ago, and one day when I was out of town four bad-men came in to start a row. Brother started in to turn 'em out, but they shot brother full of holes an' left him dead upon the floor. I was n't there—"

"Oh," said Buck, "the murderers! Were they caught?"

"Yes, they was caught and locked up in the jail. I was away—"

"But what was done?" we all cried out.

THE GRAND CAÑON

Berry spat out the cigarette and said:

"I come home. They all four died in jail that night."

TO DESCRIBE A PAINTING CALLED "SUNRISE"

OLD SOL lifted up his head above the mountain-top and looked down the valley far beneath, bathed in a vapor cold and dank that covered all the fields and meadows with their crops of corn and ripening grain. There was not sound or motion to break the stillness as of death. A dense blanket of fog covered all the earth; no herds were lowing, no birds were singing, no life seemed stirring there below.

Sol felt angry that this deathlike pall should usurp his right to hover over these green fields, these streams and all the birds and beasts and all the people there, and he determined to take up arms against the fearful thing.

Then Sol drew a mighty breath and blew great streams of fire through the mist that made it shiver, rise, and scurry off. So Sol smiled and, smiling, lit the fleeing clouds and,

A PAINTING CALLED "SUNRISE"

with the magic that he has, made of the foul fog a thing of beauty as it broke and floated off, tinged with opalescent lines that gave delight to all the early ones who saw it.

Sol was content and breathed with warmth and love upon all the crops and growing grains. Children clasped their little hands with joy, and then the church-bells rang out a call to all to come and lift their voices in praise to God who had blessed their crops and who did give to them this wondrous Sabbath day.

THE STORM

THE day is hot. The sun pours down through a blue sky without a cloud or speck to break its monotony but, as the blue reaches the earth, it is mellowed with a veil of dust that looks sultry as it lies along the horizon. The hay is being piled high upon the wagons, tossed by men reeking with sweat, and the cattle hang their heads and pant for breath as they strain upon their collars.

But now you see a little speck of white appearing in the east. It moves, and grows as it moves, up to the north, and now, still moving faster, larger grows. Around to the north, now onward to the west, it has assumed the shape of huge white balls that roll and tumble mountain high, all lit up by the sun. As they roll up into the west they change to gray and then to blue and black, and as they don their somber coat they change their course and rush back toward the east. As they come, you hear a faint rumbling sound as of cannon far

THE STORM

away, but the black pall still advances, throwing a cloak of darkness all about.

From out the darkness comes a flash of light that zigzags to the earth. Then comes a thundering peal, as from the cannon's mouth, and as it rolls and dies away it seems to menace all the earth. The trees bend down their heads, and the grain down in the meadow lies flat upon the ground as it receives a deluge of rain that fairly belches from the blackened pall above. You press your face against the window-pane and watch the stream that rushes through the road, cutting great gullies, tearing up the sod along its edge, and rolling stones and fallen limbs along in its maddened rush.

Now all is darkness that almost blots these things from sight. Then there is a flash of blinding light that makes you stagger back, followed by a crash as though the earth had split asunder. You hold your breath in awe of the fearsome thing, while it moves away with muttered growls, as though it had missed its prey and cursed you in its passing. And then another flash and crash, but somewhat far away, as though it had returned to do its

THE STORM

spite, but, weakened by its fury, subsides at last in low mutterings as the sun thrusts out his arms and parts the clouds.

He breathes upon the east, and through his breath a gorgeous arch appears, studded with every color the human senses know. There this glory stands, as if a promise it would give that all the earth should shine again. And now the grain lifts up its head and, shaking out its dripping locks, shines forth like molten gold. And then a lark mounts up above the earth and, perched upon the sign of promise, bursts into song, chanting its praise to God.

TO A WHITE CANVAS

It were a shame to mar thy virgin whiteness. In thy white robe thou dost suggest so many things. I close my eyes and see what mortal man can never do. I see a landscape with trees that really bend their crests, and leaves that really flutter in the breeze, and brooks that splash and tumble with a roar; sunlight that moves from place to place as it lightens up the swaying meadow grass, and then great thunder-clouds that roll, and thunder as they roll, or, dashing waves that beat upon the rocks with deafening sound. Thus would I paint thee if I had the power. But to what end? No, I would not paint thee thus e'en though I had the power, for with thy noise thou wouldst wake up the dead and be an abomination to all that thou wert meant to please. No, I would not paint thee thus, but if I had the power, I would suggest with paint all these things that nature shows us.

I'd paint the storm with colors that, al-

TO A WHITE CANVAS

though they showed the tempest in its fury, would fill one with delight; and even rest one would feel at the suggestion of this mighty fearful thing.

I'd carry one's imagination along with me so that he might feel the twinkle of the dew upon the leaves; or paint a babbling brook that would make one feel a wish to splash his tired feet therein; or a bed of moss that one would like to lie upon.

All this I'd do if I but had the power, and 't would be more beautiful than the thing itself, because it would show what *I* feel; and when one looked upon the picture, he and I would be together.

All this I'd do if I but had the power.

But, no, I'll leave thee for some master hand. He'll come some day; and so I'll leave thee in thy virgin white, and go to bed and dream some more. Good night.

MY WHISKY-FLASK

STAY, you that wield the spade, and hold your hand. I fain would have yon fragile-looking thing before it's smashed by your tool.

Ah, yes, 't is even as I thought—my ancient whisky-flask.

How came you here, in this foul hole to be a hiding-place for all the slimy things that crawl within the earth? You did deserve a better fate than this. 'T is true your spirit's gone and left you naught but clay, but even so you are greater than I, for when my spirit's gone, my clay will turn to dust; for I am flesh and blood that without the spirit becomes filth, whilst you are made of glass, and e'en without your spirit will last and become more beautiful with age, and, if buried in the ground for a thousand years, your iridescent beauty will outshine the jewels in a kingly crown, and even dim the rainbow in the sun.

MY WHISKY-FLASK

So, I think I'll let you lie where you were thrown.

Take it back, thou man who wields the spade, and place it gently by the side of yon foul sewer, and let it rest until some antiquarian who shall not be born for ages yet to come will dig it up and show it to the world in all its iridescent beauty.

But though *my* casket will be turned to dust and yours to radiant beauty, the spirit you did hold is dead: your spirit gone, your body fadeth never; *my* body gone, my spirit lives forever.

THE PRESENT

NIGH seventy years since mama's arms first
clasped me to her breast.

Time travels fast when one's reached near
three score years and ten.

And I have lit my pipe, and here I sit and
think of all that's past.

Past? No, there is no past for me, all is in
the present.

I would not have one action in my life put in
the past, for there is naught I would
forget.

Mistakes, perhaps, who knows? For by those
mistakes I learned all that now I know:

Not much, perhaps, as some might reckon it,
but still I'm happy.

I have gained great wealth, great love.

Renown? No, but love of wife and children
and their children.

Friends? Why yes, of course, it must be so,
because I love my friends.

And to-morrow? I have not lived to-morrow.

THE PRESENT

For well nigh seventy years I've lived, and it
is all to-day.

And now my pipe is almost out, and I will
bid you all good day, and kneel at
Mama's knee and say,

"I lay me down in peace to sleep, and pray
the Lord my soul to keep."

MY SONG

WHY sing of birds and babbling brooks to
make your song?

I'd rather tell you of my love of human
things.

God made the birds and babbling brooks, and
made them well, I trow;

But I'll tell you of the greatest love that we
poor mortals know.

For me, the love of woman is the greatest
thing in life;

And happy is the man who finds it in his wife.

THE SOUTHERN PINE

AND there thou liest, stark and naked now.
Thy glossy bark is severed from thy trunk,
and fires and scorching sun and drenching
rains have scarred and seared thy noble body,
and now thou art become the home of loath-
some things that crawl and burrow in thy
withered carcass: ants, squirming grubs,
caterpillars, lizards, slimy snails, and stinking
fungi sport at will and gorge upon thy help-
less withering trunk. I dare not approach for
fear some lurking reptile may spring from
beneath thy crumbling form. Thou wert so
beautiful, so tall, so grand and proud! I,
man and boy, did know thee fifty years. How
often have I gloried in thy strength and won-
dered at thy girth that measured more than
ten feet round! Sixty feet or more thou didst
stand, as straight as plummet-line, with never
a knot or branch to mar thy wondrous trunk
until thou stretchest out those giant arms that
spread a canopy above, all decked with green,

THE SOUTHERN PINE

where gay-plumed birds took refuge from the rain, and where an eagle perched his nest and with his mate brought forth his young from year to year. Oh, thou wert the bravest, grandest, loftiest one of all the forest round, thou long-leaved Southern Pine. No wind so strong that it could even bend thee standing there in thy might, with tap-root reaching down beneath the earth nearly a quarter of thy length. What caredst thou for all the winds that blew? They could but sway thy noble crest and cool thy sunburned sides.

How I did love thee! And I did think, perhaps if thou must change thy life, 't would be in some great cause—to form the keel of a great ship to sail the sea and defy the waves as thou didst defy the winds. Then a grimy hand wielded an ax, whose edge was bright and keen, and dashed it in thy side and sank it to its haft, and formed a box to catch thy blood, to drain thee of thy sap; and there, poor thing! thou didst stand and bleed, until Dame Nature cured the wound and healed its gaping sides; and then the grimy hand came once again and opened wide the sore, and, not

THE SOUTHERN PINE

content with what he got, came still again and scarfed thy sides as far as he could reach, and as thy life-blood dripped away, the fires came and burned thee to the heart and left thee but a scanty staff to rest thy bulk upon. And then the tempest came and snapped thy fragile base and dashed thee to the ground, to be consumed by heat and flood and all the gruesome things that crawl about. Oh, noble tree! the grandest of them all, my long-leaved Southern Pine, whose life was lost by a murderous hand for a little turpentine!

LOVED AN

THOU thing of beauty, as thou liest at my feet in thy soft bed that nestles 'tween gay flowers and bright leaves and great dark trees whose branches meet above thy head and cast black shadows here and there, beautiful thou art, but fearsome, as thy palpitating form twinkles in the sun and rippling dimples sheathe thy supple body that in its purity seems to reflect, as it were a mirror, all the loveliness that hangs above thee. I love thee, An, and oft would cast myself beside thy form and press thy body unto mine; and then I halt with fear—fear that beneath that glorious surface treachery may lurk and thy embrace might prove my ruin. And still I love you An—my An—my loved Anclote.¹

¹ A river in Florida.

MY BRIER PIPE

I'M sitting in my studio, perched in the clouds, two thousand feet above the sea. It's midnight. My wife has gone to bed, and everything is still save for the ticking of the tall old clock. It's very old, its works are made of wood, and it is wound with a string that holds a weight. No, it does not keep good time, but its ticking, that has been going on for many a year, has a soft, dull soothing sound that in the stillness of the night brings memories; and the great studio, with its dark recesses and corners, seems a fitting background for the memories that are passing through my mind.

The solitary light above me shines down on my latest canvas, which throws long shadows on the carpeted floor. I have lit my brier pipe—"old comfort," I call it. You know there's nothing like a brier pipe to an old smoker like me. I've smoked cigars, many good ones, but for solid comfort give me my

MY BRIER PIPE

brier pipe. A pipe must have a good big generous bowl that will hold plenty of fragrant, mild tobacco, and then it must be smoked very slowly. There is a science in smoking a pipe; all men do not acquire it. It is a thing to be studied. You must puff it very slowly and watch the thin wave of smoke as it mounts up to the light above and seems to hang there like a moth attracted by the flame. There it grows in volume and finally spreads out in long straight lines that form a canopy above, through which one sees so many things, some sad, some happy; and some regret. No, I'll scratch that out. There is no regret, at least not in the smoke of my old pipe. I see some visions of the past that are not so fair to look upon, but still they had to be, and by them I have learned. So, take it all in all, my life has been a happy one. The shadows only give intenseness to the light. As I sit here with my pipe I look back with pleasure, even, on those pictures that once seemed tragic and brought despair; but they were only shadows that intensified the light.

My father's death—a shadow that brought

MY BRIER PIPE

out the glory of his life and bore him on to the greater glory he believed in. And my mother, with her gentleness and love, who passed on to him and left a ray of light behind that leads me on to hope. And then my boy, my only son—just coming into manhood—passed in the shadow that revealed the light of a love that has enshrined me all these years; and, as the one who bore him, with her love and faith, soothed my anguish and taught me to believe that all was for some great good, I am content and love to look upon the picture.

Here I sit and think of all the life I've lived, of all the happiness and love about me, and am content.

Let's paint a picture of the smoke, a rolling cloud, a frightful storm of belching cannon that shatters all the world, the shriek of shell, the pall of deadly gas that in its maddening rush has dashed the youth to earth; and now the shadow lifts, and through its gloom a glorious light reveals a figure all in white, a red cross on her breast; and as she kneels, a golden star floats up into the blue.

THE PASSING OF PETER GROSS

DEAR old Peter Gross! He was the gentlest, kindest man I ever knew. He was a painter of no renown, but made a modest living by selling pictures for his friends. He looked up American tourists and gave receptions in his little studio; his own work he seldom sold, but always had a word of praise for all the other fellows' work. He'd spend his time in running errands for you. You could call upon him for any service, knowing that if it were in his power he would render it, and make you feel you had conferred an honor on him. I never heard a man speak ill of Peter Gross. On my last visit to Paris in the spring of 1913 I found Peter in his little apartment—a studio, a bedroom, a dining-room, six-by-eight, and a kitchenette. He said: "On Sunday you must dine with me; a friend has sent me a partridge. I'll have it roasted at the baker's shop, and with it I will give you the finest dinner you have eaten. I'll cook

THE PASSING OF PETER GROSS

it all myself, excepting the partridge, for that must be roasted, and I have no oven. Oh, I'm a famous cook; I'll show you. Good-by; now don't forget, on Sunday. Come early and you shall sit in the studio and look at the pictures while I am preparing the dinner. Just we two—all alone; we'll have a jolly time. *Au revoir, mon cher ami.*"

And there he stood and waved his hand until I turned the corner of the street. When you saw Peter, you saw the most "frenchy" of the Frenchmen. He was short and rather stout, well dressed in somber black, gray hair and pointed beard, a long black cloak, and low-crowned hat, and gloves and cane. *Voilà!* He had all the gestures and the bows—the "*Après vous, Monsieur,*" that would proclaim him a Parisian. Peter had lived in Paris well on to forty years, and I have been told that the French he spoke with apparent fluency was most execrable. Peter was an American, but spoke English with a slight accent, not an accent derived from French, but from Pennsylvania Dutch, from which he traced his lineage.

THE PASSING OF PETER GROSS

“Now sit down and make yourself at home. This is my happy day when I shall have the pleasure of entertaining my dear friend whom I have not seen for so many, many years. But you have not grown old. I would have known you anywhere; perhaps the years have been kind to you. Ah me—ah, well, I will not complain. You did not know my wife? No? She was not a grand lady, just a plain, gentle-hearted French peasant woman, but, oh, my friend, how I did love her! Sometimes I think she’s by my side, and then I’m happy. Maybe she’s with us here to-day. Who knows? Well, my old friend, you are hungry, are you not? I’ll run and cook the dinner. The partridge has come and he is cooked to a turn. I shall keep him hot on the back of my little stove while I am preparing all the other good things to go with him. Oh, no, not for worlds—I could not let you help me. I must do it all myself—you are the honored guest—and I go to prepare the feast. My friend, you like mashed potatoes? Yes? And just a trace of garlic in the potage, *n’est-ce-pas*? I go to wrestle with the pots and pans and leave

THE PASSING OF PETER GROSS

you to bask in the sunlight of my masterpieces.

"*Monsieur est cervi*—the soup is on the table, and, smoking hot, awaits his Majesty. Ah, do I not look the part, in my apron and chef's cap? Let me precede you just one moment, and I will remove the badge of servitude, and will greet you in the *salle-à-manger* with all the ceremony due this grand occasion.

Entrez, Monsieur, and welcome to our feast. Alfonse, his lordship's chair! And now, my friend, after Alfonse has uncorked this big black bottle of rare vintage, we shall dismiss him from our thoughts and lay aside our dignity, and make believe we're just two ordinary mortals who have met in love and friendship to eat the partridge our benevolent friend has sent us. Ah, you like those mashed potatoes? I did them all myself; but the salad—no, I will not tell you about it. You must wait until it comes—you will see; and the wine—is it not fine? Come, take another glass. I have more bottles of it. No, no, I did not buy it. I could not buy a wine like that. I painted a picture for a dozen bottles of it. Well, here's to art! I'm getting

THE PASSING OF PETER GROSS

old, but I shall come into my own one day. I shall arrive, you 'll see. Alfonse, the coffee and cigars."

A few months later Peter arrived in New York. George Elmer Brown, Frank Russell Green, and I met him at the ship and fetched him to the Salmagundi Club, where we gave him a dinner and a grand reception. Artists crowded in to shake his hand. Laymen stood and gazed with awe upon the renowned stranger with the foreign look. Kind things were said, and Peter swelled with pride to find himself so noted in the country of his birth, which he had not seen for many years. Some relatives had come from Pennsylvania to take him home, and the Salmagundi escort bade him God-speed as he stepped upon the train that bore him to his native town, where the people met him with the local band. They took him to the city hall, where the mayor introduced him to his fellow-countrymen. And many speeches of welcome were made in which they told of honors gained abroad, and dear old Peter, filled with pride and fear, just made a bow and stammered out his thanks and cried.

THE PASSING OF PETER GROSS

Poor Peter had "come into his own"; he had "arrived" at last. Then came an anxious time for his old friends who loved him, for Peter had determined to make an exhibition of his work, and he chose one of the largest cities in the Union for it. We men who knew feared for the success of the venture, but we did not dare discourage it, as dear old Peter had set his heart upon it, and prophesied a great success, with many sales and orders for more of his great works. Then he saw himself returning to Paris with pockets filled with gold, to live a life of luxury and ease, and really have an Alfonse to wait upon him. He had arrived; his friends had told him so. The local papers teemed with stories of his genius.

The gallery was secured. He bade his town good-by, and journeyed with his pictures to the mighty city.

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The paintings all were hung; those walls had never shown such splendor before. Peter was happy—happier than he had ever been in all his life. The doors of his exhibi-

THE PASSING OF PETER GROSS

tion would be opened on the morrow. People would flock to see his work, the press would be full of it, friends would gather around him and shake his hand and cry, "Bravo!" A smile of triumph played about his kindly face, he was content; and there his spirit passed, and left his clay upon the ground. He had "come into his own"—he had "arrived."

A TEMPERANCE STORY

HE was rich; a miser, some folks called him. He had never married; he had worked hard and found no time for love-making. And after many years, when he had gained what was considered in his town a large fortune, he had grown so fond of his money that he could not share it with any one. A wife was expensive, and then they might have children. He hated children; he hated wives; he hated everything that cost money. But he loved money and that was all he cared for in life. He had no friends; he wanted none. He lived in two little rooms over his office, where he carried on a real estate and insurance business. He loaned money on real estate, and by foreclosures had amassed a fortune. An old colored woman came once a day to make up his bed and clean his little house; his food he got at the village inn.

'T was a bitter cold December night. He

A TEMPERANCE STORY

drew a table close to the office stove. Then he carefully pulled down the shades at the windows. He opened a little iron safe and drew out a tin box and placed it on the table, and then he drew from his pocket a bunch of keys, selected one, and, thrusting it into the lock, took from out the box a memorandum which he spread upon the table beneath the oil-lamp that hung from the ceiling overhead. He adjusted upon his long angular nose a pair of huge rimmed spectacles, and taking up a pencil that stood with a pen in an old broken tea-cup, he traced its point down through a column of figures, and his little beady eyes twinkled as he noted down the stocks and bonds and mortgages he had safely locked in the deposit vault in the city. He drew toward him a paper pad and wrote down long columns of figures, which he added together. Then he chose from out his bunch of keys two little ones. He chuckled as he jingled them together and smiled as he almost thought aloud that these two little keys held all this wealth secure in that great vault, guarded by strong men with guns, that none might molest his

A TEMPERANCE STORY

treasure. Then he turned the leaves of his check-book, and smacked his lips as he noted the balance to his credit in the bank.

Then there came to his startled ear a sound as of some one knocking at the outer door. With almost a gasp of fright he swept everything from the table into a drawer beneath. He unlocked the door and opened it, to see his old school friend and chum, Jack, standing on the threshold, who looked almost frozen to death.

“Why, come in, old man; come in and warm yourself. It’s a bitter night to be out; come, draw up to the fire and I will get out something to cheer as well as warm you.” He went to a cupboard and fetched out a box of cigars and a bottle of whisky. No, though he loved money, he was not mean, and he was genuinely glad to see his old friend. Jack took a cigar, but declined the whisky, and said: “Oh, Tom, I’m in great trouble and have come to you for help. You are rich, Tom, and you can help me if you will. My wife and children are ill. We have scarcely enough to eat in the house, and through ill

A TEMPERANCE STORY

health I have lost my position in the bank. Our little home, that is all we have in the world, we are about to lose through foreclosure. I must have a thousand dollars, Tom, or we are ruined and turned out into the street. Will you let me have it, Tom? For old times' sake—one thousand dollars. I'll pay it back with interest; I swear I will. I'll soon get over this illness—it's really nothing—and I'll get to work again. I'll pay you back, Tom. Will you let me have the money? "

Then a hard look came into Tom's face as he clicked the two little keys on the bunch within his pocket, and said, "What security can you give me, Jack?"

"None, none," cried Jack. "I have nothing, but I thought perhaps for friendship's sake you might take the risk, and let me have the money. I'll work myself to death, but I'll pay you back, Tom."

Then Tom set his teeth deep into his cigar and said: "Jack, I can't let you have the money. I have n't it to lend; and if I had, it would do you no good. You'd pay off your

A TEMPERANCE STORY

mortgage and take out another one the next day. I know your kind. You've been a fool, Jack. You've been what some folks call generous. You have given more money away than I have ever spent. You've rather looked down on me, too, Jack, because I did n't dress as well as you, and did n't give fine dinners, and did n't join the club. You said some nasty things about me, Jack, when I foreclosed on Widow Jackson's farm. I know you gave her the money to get it back; and what good came of it? She lost the farm soon after, and where's your money now? If you had kept your money you would n't be here to-night asking me to be as big a fool as you. No, I will not lend you the money. I'm sorry for you, Jack. I'm sorry for any one who acts like a fool and throws his money away as you have done. You have no right to ask me to suffer for your follies. What few dollars I have, have been earned by hard work; and I am not going to part with them. I don't lend money without security, Jack, and that's the end of."

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Then Jack, without a word, moved slowly to the door, and as he stepped out into the cold he said, "Good night, Tom."

Tom turned the key in the door and resumed his seat at the table. He did not take out the papers from the drawer, but held the two little keys before his eyes, and as he tinkled them together he muttered to himself: "The man's a fool to think I'd give him a thousand dollars. He'd pay it back with interest, with interest indeed! He'd never live to pay it back. Why, the man's half dead already. I know what that cough means if I *am* no doctor. I wish he had not come here. What right has he to come whining to me about his poverty; it's his own fault. I'll take a drop of whisky to warm me up."

He drew the bottle toward him and poured out a generous drink, and began sipping it slowly, for Tom was not a drinking man. And then he went on musing: "Yes, Jack always was a fool. What right had he to start out like a millionaire because he got a clerkship in the bank? He bought a house and married. What right had he to marry and

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have children before he had enough to live on?" And then he drained the glass and filled it up again and went on sipping. "Poor Jack, I wonder why he would n't take a drink. He said 'Good night'! I wish he had said, 'Go to hell!' What right had he to marry Mary Blake? She was a pretty girl. I might have had her if I had been fool enough to marry. Mary Blake—and she is ill. I'm sorry, but it's their own fault. They might have saved their money. Mary had pretty eyes. I'll drink to your eyes, Mary, in another glass. After all, Jack was a good fellow. How we used to tramp along the brook in the meadow, and kill bull-frogs! I wish he had not said 'Good night.' I wonder if Jack remembers when we played hooky, and went to the cider mill, where Joel Crane let us suck the golden juice through a straw as we lay on our bellies across the fat barrels. Let us suck cider through a straw for helping him shovel apples into the press all day. Well, here's to memory, Jack! Let us suck cider through a straw for shoveling apples all day. I wish he had not said 'Good night.' I'll

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take another drink and go to bed. I'm cold—shoveling apples for a straw—”

He reached for the bottle, but his hand dropped into the table drawer and rested upon a book. He took it out and opened it and said, “Apples for a straw,” as he reached for the pen that stood in the broken tea-cup. He dropped the pen in an ink-stand that stood upon the table and wrote, “Pay to the order of John Graham, one thousand dollars,” then he signed it, put it in an envelop, which he addressed and sealed, and as he licked the stamp, he mumbled, “Apples for a straw.”

When Tom came down-stairs the next morning, his head ached a little and, as he expressed it, he felt “rotten.” But he remembered all that had happened the night before, and reaching for the envelop that lay upon the table, addressed to Mr. John Graham, he chuckled to himself. “What a fool I almost was! The whisky must have gone to my head and made an ass of me,” and he pinched the two little keys, and then he opened the stove door, and thrust the sealed envelop upon the glowing coals. Well, he'd

A TEMPERANCE STORY

straighten things up a bit before he went to breakfast. He picked up the check-book that lay on the table where he had left it and gave a sigh of relief. Then he leaned his aching head upon the table and said, "I must have taken too much of that stuff last night. I feel like the devil. They say the best cure is the hair of the dog that bit you, so I'll take a drink just to brace me up a bit." He poured out a glassful, and as he gulped it down, he murmured, "I wish he had not said 'Good night.' " Then he paced up and down the floor and sang: "An apple for a straw. Old Joel's dead and gone, an apple for a straw." Then he sat down at the table, drew the check-book toward him and wrote, "Pay to the order of John Graham, *two* thousand dollars." He signed it, sealed and addressed it, and as he licked the stamp he mumbled, "paid for shoveling apples with some cider through a straw." Then he dashed out of the little office, dropped the envelop into the post-box, and said, "Now, damn you, get on your way before I get sober again!"

URIAH AND THE HILL LOT

You see old Uriah and me never got along first rate together; I kinder thought he was mean. I suppose it was on account of him beatin' me out of about an acre of land when I bought the farm next to his'n. Isaac Cob, the postmaster, says Uriah 's mean enough to take the pennies off'n a dead man's eyes. You know the hill lot just east of the barn? Uriah wanted to buy the hill lot and offered me five hundred dollars for it, but I told him he could n't buy anything from me, and I'd see him in the bottom of the creek afore I'd sell him anything, for all his money. Uriah was mighty mad about it, but I was tickled to think I could keep him from havin' anything he wanted. And so I kept the lot and Uriah and me never speaks to each other.

I ain't no rich man, but I never did keep a boarder but wunst, and that was because I kinder took a liking to the feller. He was an Irishman, a young feller with blue eyes and

URIAH AND THE HILL LOT

red hair. I met him to the store one evenin' and we got in conversation together. He gave me a cigar and said he was on his vacation and come up to these parts to do some fishing—said he 'd like mighty well to come up to my farm and see the country. So next day up he comes, and found some trout in the creek, and kept on a comin' nearly every day. Sometimes mother 'd ask him in to dinner, and he 'd tell us yarns about his travels, and things he done, and he 'd tell it so 's you 'd get to laughing, till the tears run down your cheeks. I don't know as the stories was so funny, but his brogue was, and he 'd keep it up all through dinner. Well, one day after we 'd got awful fond of him, he asked mother if she 'd take him to board. He said it was awful lonely down to the hotel and he 'd growed so fond of the children. Mother and me consulted together and decided to take him. So I hitched up next day and fetched him up with his trunk, and mother gave him the front room over the parlor. His name was Riley. Riley was the best-natured feller I ever see. He always had a good word for

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everybody 'cept Uriah, and he hated him like pizen, 'cause Uriah hunted him off'n his land when he went fishin'. I was there when Uriah drove him off, and said he 'd have him arrested if he ever caught him fishin' on his property ag'in. I tell you, it done me good to hear Riley cuss Uriah back. He called him all the names he knew how, and told him he 'd wipe the floor with him one of these days. Uriah was half crazy and rushed away like a madman. Riley went up in my judgment from that day. I really loved Riley. One day Riley was helpin' me with the hay when he says he 'd like to live in the country all his life. He said he had a little money and would like to build himself a little house, and do a little gardening. He said he had the dearest little Irish girl he was going to marry, and he knowed she 'd love this part of the country. Riley said he 'd had his eye on a piece of land that belonged to Uriah, but he supposed that now he could n't talk business with Uriah, 'cause they 'd had that row about the fishin'. That night mother and me got talkin' about it, and agreed we 'd like

URIAH AND THE HILL LOT

to have Riley for a neighbor and we 'd offer him the hill lot that had about ten acres in it. So I says to him next day, "Riley, mother and me 's been a-thinkin' that if you 'd like to settle about here and build a house, we 'd be willin' to sell you the hill lot. I don't really need it, and old Uriah 's been a-pesterin' me to sell it to him. He offered me five hundred dollars for it, but I told him I 'd see him in the brook afore I 'd sell him anything."

Riley slapped me on the back and said, "Be jabers, if I had that amount of money, I 'd buy it meself, just to spite that old spalpeen; but I could n't pay that amount of money," says he. Mother and me talked it over some more, and so I says to him: "Riley, I 'd like to have you have the hill lot and what do you think you could afford to pay for it? You see, we 've all growed so fond of you, that we kinder hate to see you go."

"Well," says Riley, "begorra, it 's fine to be thought that much of, and I 'd like to have a bit of a home here amongst yer, for I 've growed to look upon yer and your wife like yer was my father and mother, and I 'm just

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that fond of the children that it breaks me heart to think of leavin'; but I've got to build a house, and I could n't afford to spend more 'n three hundred dollars for the land."

"Well," says I, "if you'll give me some work to do on the building I'll let you have that ten-acre hill lot for three hundred dollars cash, though Uriah did offer me five hundred dollars for it."

Riley almost cried when he shook mother and me by the hand to bind the bargain. Said we were doin' too much for a poor Irish lad, but he'd never forget it. He said he'd go to New York the next day and get the money, and I should go down to Lawyer Sims and get the deed drawn up. Sure enough, he went to New York next day, and I drove him with his trunk down to the station. He said he'd be back in two days with the money, and then he'd have to go back to New York and see a feller about the plans for his house. Well, he come back just as he said he would, and I met him at the hotel and give him the deed signed by me and mother, and he give me three hundred dollars, all in fresh new money.

URIAH AND THE HILL LOT

And when we said good-by to him on the train, we almost all three cried. I never see Riley ag'in—but Uriah's built a boardin'-house on the hill lot.

THE SEALSKIN COAT

I HAD one year in the Academy of Design a rather ambitious picture entitled, "Crossing the Ford." It was hung rather high; in fact it was in the usual place that seemed to be allotted to me, over a door. This was in the old "Doge's Palace" on Twenty-third Street. Well, the picture was quite an ambitious one, and the price I put upon it was five hundred dollars. I never expected to sell it, but, of course, I had to have a price for the catalog. Imagine my surprise at receiving a visit from Jim Bell, the tailor, who asked if I would take in exchange for the picture a sealskin coat that had cost him six hundred dollars. I said "No." I had no use for a sealskin overcoat. But Mr. Bell finally persuaded me to call at his shop and look at it. The coat was certainly very beautiful, but, Lord! how would I look decked out in sealskin! Mr. Bell said that he had a number of these coats that he wanted to get rid of—said I would

THE SEALSKIN COAT

look fine in the coat with a silk hat and a pair of sealskin gloves when driving in the park. I told him all my driving in the park was done on Shanks' mare, and I had no silk hat or sealskin gloves. Then he said I might give the coat to my girl, and she could have it made over. But I replied, "I hain't got no girl."

"But," I said, "Mr. Bell, if you like my picture so much, I will let you have it for two suits of clothes and an overcoat of which I am in great need."

Bell's reply rather startled me, when he said: "I don't like the picture, but I want to get rid of the coat. Why, Inness, I would not make you a vest for that picture."

About a week after this, I saw James Beard, the dog-painter, sailing up Broadway trailing a beautiful sealskin coat; its skirt touched the sidewalk. I stopped in at Bell's and asked him to show me his Beard.

"How did you know I had a Beard?" he said, as he showed me a little canvas about 16 x 24 of a little black-and-tan dog.

"Why, I saw Jim with the coat on to-day."

THE COLONEL

I MET the colonel at a club dinner given in honor of some high personage from abroad. At the colonel's request he was seated at my side and introduced by one of the entertainment committee. The colonel was rather a short man, well built, with an extreme military air. His hair was white and he wore a mustache and imperial. His clothes were of the latest Fifth Avenue cut and he wore two very small pearls in his shirt-front. In fact, he looked as though he had just come out of a band-box, and still I felt a little annoyed at meeting him. I felt at once he was going to make a demand upon me.

Now, I will confess, though I should not care to have it known, that I am one of those weak persons who find it difficult to say "No!" I am fairly well fixed as far as worldly goods go, and some of my friends have found it out. So, as I have said, I felt uncomfortable all through that dinner, with

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the colonel at my side. I do not remember much about the dinner, as the colonel kept up an incessant flow of talk. I was going to say "conversation," but that would hardly express it, as I had no part in it. In fact, I doubt that I had a chance to make more than a remark in acknowledgment of the flattering shower that was poured upon me. The colonel had long desired to meet me, but he had known me for a long time by reputation, and we had many friends in common. He was a great admirer of my father, and it was one of the regrets of his life that he had never been fortunate enough to meet him. The colonel told me a great deal about himself, some of his war experiences, and said he would send me some literature on the subject. Had it not been for the stylish get-up of the colonel, I believe I would have been taken in by his high praise of my talents, and thought myself the great genius he proclaimed me to be, but I always was afraid of clothes.

I am not a well-dressed man myself. Not that I am averse to wearing good clothes, and I have at intervals patronized some of the

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fashionable tailors. But I am not blessed with much of a figure, unless you mention my back, which is very prominent, and at times would suggest that it had become changed with my chest. Therefore, no matter who made my clothes, or how expensive they were, after the second day they would so fit themselves to my shape that I am sure no fashionable tailor would acknowledge me as a customer. Now I go to Rogers Peet and buy them by the half-dozen, and they suit me very well.

The men who generally persuaded me that to accede to their financial demands would be of the greatest benefit to me wore good clothes, and the colonel wore good clothes.

I knew this new acquaintance would cost me something, and so busy was I devising ways of throwing him off, of thinking how much he would demand and how far I could beat him down, when the inevitable blow should come, that it was hard to follow his trend of thought. He was from the West—had been stopping at the Astor. Oh, thought I, the Astor bill to pay. He hoped to get away from New York in a day or two. I

THE COLONEL

wondered what the fare was to his home out West, but he could not think of leaving without visiting me in my studio. Now I must not deny him; might he call to-morrow? He knew it was Sunday, but possibly I should not mind, and we could have a nice quiet talk together. Of course I said I should be delighted. Of course I lied, but then, you know, I never could say "No." I have tried to lots of times, but no go; it seems to frighten me, it sounds so harsh. "Yes" is much softer, more pleasing to the ear, and so I said, "Yes." At about eleven o'clock the next morning the colonel called. There were three of my friends with him, not, however, the friends I have been telling you about. I must say I felt a great sense of relief at seeing him in their company. Surely he could not ask for anything while they were present. I really was happy, was genuinely glad to see them, got out a box of cigars and some whisky, and settled down for a congenial Sunday morning, for I was very fond of these friends. After looking at pictures and talking of art for some time, my friends asked me to go with

THE COLONEL

them to see a private collection of pictures uptown. I mustered up courage enough to tell them I had an engagement that morning and could not go. Another lie, but I feel I should be forgiven. I saw in it a way to throw the colonel off. But what was my alarm when they said, "Well, Colonel, come along," and to hear him reply he would like to be excused as he wanted to have a little talk with me and would like to remain and smoke another of my excellent cigars! I had the colonel on my hands, after all. I determined from that time on always to tell the truth! It was so stupid to have told that lie; if I had gone with the friends, I should have been safe! Well, the door had hardly closed when the colonel said: "I did not want to go with them, I wanted to have a visit with you; the fact is I came here with a purpose. I should like to make a proposition—" It was out; the blow had come; there was no getting out of it now! I hoped against hope that the amount would be small, when the colonel asked, "What is your price for that little picture?" I replied, "Three hundred dollars." The colonel said,

THE COLONEL

"Ah, I will take it. If I may use your desk I will give you a check for it now, and you can send the canvas to this address at your leisure. Good day."

A FAIRY-TALE

ONCE upon a time a youth who lived in a hut in the woods with his parents, who burned charcoal for a livelihood, saw a crippled bird which had fallen from its nest. He called his dog and sought to have him kill it, but the bird cried out: "Oh, spare my life! I'm sent here on this earth to do some good, but I am very young and would not die before I have achieved the task that has been set me. I am a fairy in disguise, and if you will spare my life, I'll let you choose the thing you most desire, and whatever you name that you think will make you most happy, that I will grant you."

Then the youth replied: "I will spare your life if you will give me gold—more gold than all the men who ever lived dreamed that they might possess—gold that will grow in heaps, gold that will cover my poor body when I die—"

A FAIRY-TALE

“T is weal or woe,” the birdy said. “I ’ll give you all you ask. To-morrow morn you ’ll dig beneath your hut and you will find gold untold, but I would caution you to do good with all the gold you get; go out into the world and with your wealth succor the poor and needy—give all away and keep naught for yourself. Give to the poor, the lame, the halt, the blind, and when your time shall come to die, you ’ll lay yourself down in peace, and I will come with a band of fairies, brighter than the gold itself, and waft you on to a life that will be more glorious than aught you have seen upon the earth, with all the gold you have. But if you do *not* give the very gold that you do love, it shall be your death, and when you enter that great glorious world beyond you ’ll wander like a lonely soul; for though you shall shine so bright with the yellow metal that enshrouds you, none will know that you are there; you will be spurned as some yellow weed whose perfume fouls the air. Farewell, fond youth, I thank you for my life. Go home and dig gold, but don’t forget.”

A FAIRY-TALE

The youth next morn feigned sickness and stayed at home while his parents went forth, as was their wont, to burn the charcoal that they sold in town to buy the daily bread they brought to feed the youth. He had dug much gold that day and hid it in the loft. Fearing his parents might find his gold and take it from him, he smote them both to death that night as they lay unsuspecting in their beds.

Then he dug and dug each day and stored the glittering gold above, nor went he to the town for bread, but lived on berries, herbs, and bark, and dug his gold. He wore no clothes, his body grew long hair, and so he dug and dug for fifty years. The hole beneath the house was a deep chasm. One night a little mouse crept o'er his face, and he jumped up in his rage and tried to catch the little thing, but tripped and fell and broke both of his legs. He lay on the floor and could not move from that one spot. Then the little mouse got all his friends and gnawed away the beams, until the floor above gave way, and all the golden metal came pouring

A FAIRY-TALE

down and struck him on the head and smote him hip and thigh.

When he called for help, a little bird with crippled wing came and perched upon the heap of gold and said: "What would you have of me? I've paid my debt." Then the man, who now was very old, cried out, "Oh, save me from the gold—" And then the bird made answer: "No, it is too late; you've dug away the foundations of your house, and now the weight of all the gold you have will cast you down into the deepest depths, and bury you deep beneath that which you loved most. Gold is one of the heaviest metals that we know."

THE HAUNTED HOUSE

A CRASHING storm is raging without. It is midnight, and I am all alone within the house. I fain would go to bed, but I feel I could not sleep, for all the furies are at large to-night. Great peals of thunder roll and clash and roar and rumble off to gather up more furies and return. Flash, and crash on crash repeat, and flash again, and clash with added fury; a deluge drives in sheets upon the window-pane. Fierce gusts of wind rush on as though intent to crush whate'er stood in its path. A sound of rushing water meets the ear, and a blinding flash that stuns the senses as it dims the lighted lamp. Then another crash that shakes the very rafters of the house as though the maddened furies strove to shake it from its stone foundation.

But now the storm's fury is spent, and with many a growl, and sigh, and sob, it limps away, far out into the east. Now comes a

THE HAUNTED HOUSE

lull that is still as death itself, that makes one hold his breath with awe, and then faint sounds are heard throughout the lonely house, a creaking door, a footstep on the stairs; and then the ghosts arrive, and fill the room, and breathe soft music in my ear. The hum goes on in soothing rhythm, broken only by the *tick-tock* ticking of the clock out in the hall. And still the ghosts come on and fill my eyes with glorious pictures of sun-lit forests, of dew-wet pastures, where herds are grazing, and gay-plumed birds are passing by, chanting songs of praise and joy and happiness as they pass.

Then some dear old friend or loved one who has passed and gone beyond sits down in yonder vacant chair and talks of times gone by—of love and beauty that we knew together.

'T is good to see these ghosts that come to cheer my loneliness and fill my heart with beauty and with love.

Then they tuck me into bed and say, "Good night," and I thank my God for this old haunted home, and go to sleep.

THE PIANO STOOL

ONCE upon a time a piano-maker conceived the idea that if he could invest in pictures—"oil-paintings"—he would realize a fortune when the artist became famous. He had read of the increase in the value of Millet, Corot, Inness, Wyant, and others, and it looked good to him, so he determined to acquire a collection. He went to many artists who had not yet arrived at fame, and exchanged pianos for oil-paintings. A friend of mine agreed to paint him a beautiful marine for a piano. The piano was delivered at his studio, and proved to be most satisfactory, but he had no piano stool on which to sit when playing it. He called on the piano man and told him he was delighted with the piano, but he had forgotten to send a stool. The piano man said he did not sell piano stools, and the artist would have to go to a furniture store for it. My friend said: "Nonsense! I can't afford to buy a stool. I have no money, and how am I

THE PIANO STOOL

going to play the piano without a stool to sit upon?" The piano man told him he could take a chair and put the Bible on it; but the artist protested he had no Bible and must have a stool. However, the piano man was firm in his refusal to provide him with one. He said the contract was for the piano only. "Well," said the artist, "I must have a piano stool and I will make you a proposition. If you will send around to my studio a nice piano stool, one of the kind that turns on a screw so that one can adjust its height, I will paint another wave in the picture." The piano man was pleased and said, "Honest?" "Sure," said the artist; "I'll give you another wave for a piano stool." They clinched the bargain with a hand-shake, and the piano man got an oil-painting with an extra wave thrown in, and my artist friend has a stool that he can twirl up or down at will.

THE CIRCUS DOG

POOR Jack, the circus dog, was tired of his job; they made him walk on two legs when he wanted to walk on four. Each night he stood upon his head, and had to jump through hoops, and ride a pony round the ring. They dressed him up in scarlet pantaloons and made him dance about, and if he failed, they cuffed his ears and sometimes, when behind the scenes, they lashed him with a whip. Now, Jack began to think it was all wrong to make a dog act like a man. He thought if men were fools enough to walk upon their hind legs it was none of his concern. He did not ask them to get down and use their front ones, too. If it was their pleasure to put on clothes, and wave their forepaws in the air, and swing a cane, and smoke cigars, he'd let them have their way. He'd rather be just a plain dog, and be left alone to wag his tail behind; and so he made up his mind to bolt and run away.

THE CIRCUS DOG

So he did; and ran and ran until he came to a far-off town. But when he got there all tired out, the boys and girls began to shout: "Mad dog!" "Mad dog!" which made him madder yet, and he snapped and growled and howled. The people chased him up and down the streets with sticks and stones and guns. He ran, poor thing, into my yard to find a place to hide. I, thinking like the rest, that the poor dumb brute was mad, rushed into the house and fetched my gun. Now just before the woodshed door there was an ancient chair, and as I drew a bead on him he leaped upon the chair, and, kneeling down, placed his fore-paws on its back, and bowed his head between his paws and said his prayers. I dropped the gun and snatched him from the chair and held him in my arms. He gave a sigh and licked my face. I took him into the house and saved him from the mob, and now he walks on all four legs and wags his tail at will. But habits stick to dogs as well as to men, and every night he mounts upon a chair, and bows his head upon his paws, and says his prayers.

MY STOMACH AND I

THINGS were beginning to look rather serious. My studio rent was due, had been due for three months, and I expected to be dispossessed any moment. I had explained to the landlord that he was perfectly safe in letting me remain in the studio, for I would surely pay him sometime, but I could do nothing until I had sold a picture. I hate to owe anything, and it was troubling me. Added to this, my clothes, which were none too new, were growing very large; and to cap the climax, my stomach was beginning to cry out with indignation at the neglect that it seemed to think had been shown it.

Now, this stomach and I had been acquaintances, if not real friends, for some time, and I always did feel a reluctance in going back on a friend. Aside from this, I had over-indulged this one on rare occasions when some true lover of art had invited me to dinner and shown me off to his family. There is a sort

MY STOMACH AND I

of mystery surrounding artists. They are not just like other folks; they are rather wicked, they had lived in Paris, painted *Trilbys* from the nude. In fact, they are perfectly charming, and Mrs. Fitz-Hamilton Jones will tell every one she knows that she dined with an artist at your house. Of course his clothes did not fit him; did he borrow them from some restaurant waiter friend? But he is amusing, tells stories, and makes one wonder just how wicked he is.

So sometimes I would be invited to dine out, and if I indulged my lifelong friend too much and got him in the habit of craving the good things, it was my own fault and I could not blame the old fellow for kicking when put upon an allowance of nothing-at-all. So we wrapped up a picture of a bull's head and strolled up Tremont Street to a little alley that cuts through to Washington Street. In this alley thrives our old friend the eating-house man, George Hovey. As we enter, I see Enekin perched on a high stool eating a fifteen-cent lunch, and is that Seevey at the other end of the counter? No, of course not;

MY STOMACH AND I

he paints roses on black enamel panels, and dines at the Parker House.

We sneak into Hovey's little office, my stomach and I. On ordinary occasions we would have greeted Enekin, for we are very fond of him, but just now we are intent on business. We greet George Hovey as he sits in his little office, holding a very yellow cigar in the exact center of his mouth. He is a very round-faced, clean-shaven gentleman of portly dimensions, with a good-natured smile and a Yankee twinkle in his eye.

George has a sense of humor and enjoys a joke or a good story.

In my business dealings I never beat about the bush, so I accosted him by saying:

"I 've got a picture here I want you to buy."

"Buy a picture?" says Hovey. "Why, I guess I ain't much of a picture-buyer. No, I ain't got no money for pictures."

"Well," I responded, "I don't want money, but I want to eat."

"Why, you ain't hungry, are yer? Now, that 's too bad. S'pose we look at the picture. Well now, do tell, is that it? What does it

MY STOMACH AND I

represent? A bull's head, you say. Well, I never would have knowed it. What's it worth?"

"A million," I cried.

"Gosh!" said Hovey, "that 's high, ain't it? A million?"

"Well," said I, "I don't expect to get a million, but how many fifteen-cent meal tickets will you give me for it?"

"Well, let me see. You say it represents a bull's head, and it's worth a million, but you'll take meal tickets for it. Of course I could n't pay a million for it, and bulls ain't the best critters to have in a china shop, but what do you say to six?"

"What, six meal tickets at fifteen cents a piece?" I cried. "Why, Hovey, it's robbery!"

"Yes," says he, "I know it is; but, you see, I ain't proposin' to do no robbery, but you're proposin' I should, so what d' yer say?"

"I say no, you can't have it for that; but if you will make it twelve, and a box of cigars, the picture is yours."

"Well," said Hovey, "fifty five-centers?"

MY STOMACH AND I

"Yes, five-centers, and a box of fifty I accept."

We shake hands to bind the bargain, and in a very few minutes my friend and I are comfortably perched on a stool. It took only one stool to hold us both, where we destroyed food to the amount of two tickets.

THREE CRONIES

THREE old friends had lived together for many years and shared one another's joys and sorrows, if sorrows they ever had, and this I doubt, for though they were old in years, they had never really grown up. They loved a glass of liquor and they loved a game of cards, but the love they bore one another outweighed the other two.

One night (for they always met at night) after the game was ended and the jovial glass was filled, they commenced to talk of serious things, of the life they enjoyed and then of death—that grim old thing that comes to every one.

Then Myron said to Earny and to George: "I don't fear death, but I am scared to death to think I might be buried when I was still alive. So now I'll ask you two dear old friends to give a promise true: that when I die you'll come and view my corpse and make sure that I *am* dead. This question you must

THREE CRONIES

promise faithfully to ask, 'Myron, old man, let's have a drink,' and if I don't respond you may be sure I'm dead."

This quaint conceit of Myron's made them laugh and cheered them up a bit, and then with solemn promise they declared they'd surely ask the question.

Earny said, "Indeed, you'll be awfully dead if you don't rise when we ask that question." They all three laughed and clinked their glasses as they took their farewell drink. That night old Myron took a cold, and in three days he died. Poor George and Earny could not believe their dear old friend was really dead, but still they feared it might be true, for he looked so cold and still.

The three old cronies were together all that night, two weeping as they sat and one lying cold and still. Then George got up and taking Earny by the hand approached the bed whereon the body lay, and with streaming eyes and a great sob, cried, "Earny, ask the question"; but Earny, sobbing, gulped and cried, and with great tears running down his cheeks said: "Oh, hell! I can't! You ask it,

THREE CRONIES

George.” Then George exclaimed, “Myron, old man, get up and have a drink.” But Myron never moved or stirred. The other two fell upon their knees beside the bed and Earny said, “He did not answer, George; he surely must be dead!”

WHY SHOULD YOU MOURN, DEAR

WHY should you mourn, dear, because I've
gone before?

You knew that one must pass, dear, first,
through the open door.

Why should you mourn, dear? You know 't
will not be long

Before you join me there, dear, in the home
where I have gone.

Of course I feel regret, dear, to leave you here
alone,

We were so dear to each, dear, in our happy
earthly home.

'T is not for us to say, dear, why this great
sacrifice,

Why I who was but half your worth have gone
to paradise.

MY LADY FAIR

SOMETIMES I've seen her as she lies in slumber, beneath her coverlet of purest white, and even there she's beautiful. Ofttimes she, all unconscious, thrusts out her arms or limbs that, in the cold glare of the moon, are enshrined in a twinkling diadem, studded with the flashing lights of all the precious stones.

Then she awakes, and casting off her downy coverlet of white, springs up and dons a morning gown of soft, tender malachite, festooned about with delicate azalea. I hold my breath and think there never was so fair a creature. Then, with blushing coquetry, she changed this gown for one of richer hue, and spread about her stately form a wealth of mountain laurel, whose delicate cream petals, tinged with just a blush of red, enhanced her radiant beauty.

Not content with this, the witching thing must change her gown again. This time to a robe so gorgeous that I gasped, and had desire to clasp her in my arms, and revel in

MY LADY FAIR

the wealth of colors she displayed—the reds and greens, and golden-yellow hues, and all the colors that the mind can grasp.

As she stands quivering there, lighted by the sun, I give a cry of passionate delight. But ere I can embrace her, she has changed to somber brown. Then naked stands once more, until again she draws her white blanket of snow about her form and goes to sleep.

CAMP COMFORT

GREAT cypress-trees and palms and oaks and cedars, joined with maples, elms, and glossy-leaved magnolias, tumble their heads together in a tangled mass above, and at their roots huge ferns much taller than a man, and vines decked with gay flowers—green moss and iris mix with the jasmine—and grapevines crawl and creep like snakes through thick palmetto; here and there the cypress knees peep out to give the place a weirdness in its beauty. And here, midst all this glorious tangle, flows the Anclote. Beautiful? Yes, but sometimes almost fearsome as she reflects dark chasms, black as night, save for the ripple from some lazy alligator as he crawls upon the bank to find a spot the trees have failed to shade and where he can bask in the sun.

Here I've set my camp—Camp Comfort is its name—away out beyond the hum of town and trolley-car. And here I live, and paint

CAMP COMFORT

sometimes, and smoke my brier pipe. Sometimes I catch a fish, a big-mouthed bass that makes the reel hum merrily as he strikes the fly and dashes off; and then I let him have some line, and then I reel him in and let him out again; and play him back and forth, but never let the line go slack, for he is very strong and could with ease break rod and line if I gave him a chance. Ofttimes he will weigh ten pounds or more, and if he gives one splash he's off and gone, and causes me to talk in French, which puts my pipe out. And when your pipe is out you cannot fish. But it is seldom that he gets away; and when he's caught and safe within the boat, I paddle home to camp and show him to my wife. Oh, yes, I have a wife. I could not live in camp without her. She is so dear and loves to share my loneliness.

Our loneliness is the most cheerful thing on earth to us.

THE KISS

As I sat and almost slumbered, one very chilly night, before my open fire, which gave warmth to all the room, I tried to wake my brain to think of something I might write about, or some fair picture that might spring from out the gloom.

The guttering candle that stood on the mantel-shelf sputtered out at last and left me there with darkness.

And then *she* came, all dressed in white, a slender thing. She beckoned to me to awake, and press her to my lips; and, as her fragrant breath enhaled with mine, my slumbering brain awakened, and I saw as through a vapor a radiant light that in the darkness shone like precious stones, and then it seemed to take all sorts of shapes—of fairies dancing in the clouds; and then a storm at sea with great waves dashing on a helpless hulk, with mast all charred; and just a spark of fire that had

THE KISS

consumed the ship was all that there was left of the fierce conflagration that had done to death the people who had sailed with that fair ship, with brave hearts, and great hopes of wealth and home that they would make in the land of promise beyond the sea.

As I pressed her to my lips once more, the vision changed, the light waxed strong, and as she lay within my clasp her slender body seemed to glow with a fire that lighted a spark within me, too; that made me mad for more. I pressed her fragile form, I pressed my lips in wanton ecstasy, as though I would enhale her very life. And then she smote me with her blood-red tongue, the naughty wild coquette, as though to say, "Don't press so close your smoked-out cigarette!"

THE PORTRAIT

THE portrait's come; it is the likeness of my wife. Our friends have gathered round, and with many an exclamation of delight pronounced it fine. A speaking likeness. Her very face is there before you, every feature traced with consummate skill—her nose, her chin, her eyes, the color of her hair. Yes, truly, it is wonderful to see how true it is to life. The very gown she wore, the jewel at her throat—they all are there in marvelous fidelity. Friends gather round and shake me by the hand, congratulating me on the possession of so wonderful a portrait, so great a work of art. I, too, am proud that I possess this wondrous work, wrought by the brush of one whose fame has traveled round the world, and when I show it to my friends I tell with pride the name of him that did the painting. And now some years have passed, and she, the wife I loved, who made my home the happiest

THE PORTRAIT

place on earth, has passed and gone beyond, and left me here in loneliness, to hope that soon I'll go, and then perhaps I'll meet her in the place where she has gone. And here to-night I sit and look upon that wondrous canvas. I've come to think of her I loved beyond the treasures of the world. How true it is—her nose, her chin, her eyes, the color of her hair! But where is she? It is not she, 't is naught but the frail casket where she did abide. Why stare at me? Thou didst not so when I did hold thee in my arms. Canst thou not speak to me? Canst thou not move thy lips? Canst thou not shrug thy dainty shoulders? No, it is not She I loved, 't is but the outline of a face that the skilled painter caught. He did not know her soul, her mind; how could he paint what he had never seen? He was a stranger to her life and mine. Ah, had I the power to wield the brush as this great painter could! But, no, it could not be; no mortal hand could put on canvas what I, with closed eyes, can see. I'll turn the canvas to the wall, and in the still of the night her soul will come, and I

THE PORTRAIT

shall see her face in all its moods, and she will comfort me; and the portrait that my mind will paint will be more real than any stranger's hand can do.

MY FATHER'S SON

I NEVER became an artist; I always was an artist. I was an artist as kings are kings; it was desired before my birth that I should be an artist. My parents decided the question, and I had nothing to say in the matter. My first plaything was a paint-brush. I cut my teeth on a paint-brush, not a rattle; the first thing I saw was paint, the first thing I smelled was paint and turpentine, the first word I spoke was art. My mother called me her little artist. My school-teachers were told I was an artist, and allowed me to neglect my studies and pursue my art. Everybody knew I was an artist, and I accepted the fact and knew nothing else.

I had no ambition to become an engine-driver, an Indian-killer, or the proprietor of a candy-store. I may have envied the boys who were going to be these things, but fate had made me what I was—an artist—and I bowed to the decree and was content. I never

MY FATHER'S SON

blamed my parents for making me an artist, nor do I blame them for giving me my father's name, though they should have named me Zachariah Jones. They, poor dears, did not know my father would become so famous. Now, if they had camouflaged me with Zachariah Jones, my poor attempts might pass as good enough for Zac; but that I should dare to flaunt the mantle of the great, that fate had cast upon me. It was a crime indeed. A great man's son has no right to live. It makes confusion; one does n't know which is which. Why pay forty thousand dollars for an Inness when you can get one for fifty dollars? Of course the picture as a work of art cuts a very little figure. It's the name we're selling and we want no confusion in the matter. But, still, I'm glad I am not Zac, for I've learned to love the trade, and glory that I am my father's son, and I am proud to follow in the steps of one whose memory I revere.

That I had talent, I really don't believe, because my dear old drawing-master, when I refused to cross-hatch the shadows, said I was lazy, and sent me home. He said he would

MY FATHER'S SON

not take my father's money, that I had no sense of art, that I never could learn to be an artist, and as I showed no talent, he said he would advise my father to put me in a store or make me learn some useful trade. But dear old pop persisted, notwithstanding, and decided if the master could not make an artist of me, he would take the job upon himself. And so when many years had passed, and I found myself a member of the jury at the Academy of Design, I received a letter from my dear old master that read: "My dear and illustrious pupil—I am sending a little picture to the Academy and if, in your judgment, you can find some merit in it, I should be most grateful if you will see that it is received."

FRANK BABCOCK

AT last I was in Medfield—dear old Medfield, where so many happy days of my childhood had been spent. Fifteen years had passed, and fifteen years in your youth is a long, long time. I had traveled much, in many parts of the world, and I had met many noted people, and I had fallen in love; but through it all I had my boyhood friend Frank Babcock in mind. Frank was a year older than I; he was much bigger and stronger, and I looked up to him with a boyish worship, and through all my travels, and through all those fifteen long years, I longed to see Frank. Many a time when I was sketching on the Roman Campagna I would picture to myself the time when I should return to America, where I would look up Frank Babcock. I wondered if he had changed. No, I should know him anywhere. He must look just the same. Why, I could see him now just as he looked with his bare feet, and his trousers held

up with one strap of a suspender. I was not allowed to wear a suspender. My little trousers were buttoned to a white waist, and I had to wear shoes and have my face washed and my hair brushed. How I envied Frank! Of course I should find him at work, but he would take a day off, and we would go down to the brook and kill a big bull-frog with a stick and we would climb on Joel White's wagon and go to the cider-mill and lie on our stomachs on a barrel and, with a long straw, suck the delicious juice through the bung-hole. Or, we would race through the cemetery, undressing as we ran, to see who would be the first to jump into the mill-pond at the foot of the hill. Frank, of course, would beat me, because all he had to do was to slip the suspender from his shoulder, and give a shake and a kick, and, there you are. And we might meet Pat Sheeliey, the blacksmith's son, and Frank would punch him on the nose for sticking his tongue out at me and calling me, "Sissy with the curls." Oh, lots of things we 'd do and be two boys again.

And here I was in Medfield. I went to the

FRANK BABCOCK

village store, the post-office, and inquired if a man named Frank Babcock still lived in Medfield. And then I began to tremble. I was all excitement and held my breath as I listened for the answer, in fear that Frank no longer lived in Medfield. Then the long, lanky man with the chin whiskers drawled out: "Why, yes, Frank Babcock works at Baches' cracker bakery." Baches' cracker bakery—I knew it so well! Oh, what a happy chance to meet Frank there, where we used, in those dear old days, to sneak in at noon and grab a hot cracker as they fell in the huge baskets in front of the ovens! And here I was at the bakery door, and to my inquiry a boy yelled out, "Hey, Frank Babcock, here's a feller wants to see yer." And then a great big-bearded man approached, shirt-sleeves rolled up and hands and arms white with flour. I stretched out my hand; he wiped his own on his apron. I said, and trembled with excitement as I said it, "Are you Frank Babcock?" And as he nodded in assent, I grasped his hand and almost pulled him outside as I exclaimed, "God bless you, Frank,

FRANK BABCOCK

I'm George Inness. Do you remember me, Frank?" And he replied, "Yes, sir." "And do you remember those good old days when we were boys?" And he replied, "Yes, sir." "And do you remember the hill in front of the studio where we used to coast down 'belly gullers,' and my sled with the swans' heads on it? And, oh, Frank, I've looked forward to this time for many a year, and I *am* so glad to see you; do you remember me, Frank?" And he answered "Yes, sir." And a great big lump rose in my throat as I shook his hand once more, and almost with a sob said, "Good-by, Frank." And as I turned away and brushed the flour from my hand, I heard him say, "Good-by, sir."

THE SECOND ADVENTIST

WE leaned upon the old rail fence, he on his side, I on mine, and discussed the prospects for a good crop. He said, "Your corn is lookin' pretty good, and if we get a spell o' rain, I guess you 'll have a crop; but you 'll never have no chance to harvest it, 'cause this here footstool won't be here more 'n a couple of months." He was a Second Adventist, and we had talked on the subject many a time. I said, "You really think it's coming soon—the destruction of the world?" "Yes," he replied, "it's just as sure as shootin'. I've made all my calculations, and it can't fail this time. Yes, I'll admit I've made mistakes, but this time it's coming off, and I'm ready. I wish you was; for those that don't believe will be snuffed out like a candle; they'll never rise no more; and it's only the believers that'll be saved and sit on the right hand of God. You may shake your head and laugh, but I know what I'm talking about. I'd like

THE SECOND ADVENTIST

to save you, because I always liked you. This footstool won't last more 'n two months, and then the trump will sound, and all them that 's prepared will be taken up to heaven; but woe unto them that don't believe! Yes, I 'll admit I 've been mistaken before, but that was because I made a mistake in my calculations; but this time there ain't no mistake. Oh, I ain't ashamed to acknowledge I made a mistake years ago and I ain't ashamed to tell you about it. You see, we Adventists had made up our minds the trump was goin' to sound on a certain night and we had our robes all prepared. I felt cock-sure our calculations was right, and I went to a temperance meeting and I warned them all; and, just to prove to them that I believed, I got up and told them that I had a watch I thought a mighty lot of, but as I would n't have no use for it more 'n a day or two, I 'd put it in the collection-plate. And so I did, and had to buy it back, 'cause we 'd missed the time by thirty years or more. But this time there ain't going to be no mistake. So get ye ready and believe—and, say, I want to sell you this here

THE SECOND ADVENTIST

lot. It's worth the money and you ought to have it to square up your place." "But," I asked, "why sell it to me? According to your calculation I sha'n't be here to enjoy it, and if you are so anxious to get rid of it, why not give it to me? You won't want it after the trump blows." He laughed. "You think you 'll ketch me like they did at the temperance meetin', but, no, you won't; I ain't going to take no chances. But, to tell you the truth, I'm in debt, and I know the time is short, and I want the money, so 's I can go before my Heavenly Father clear of debt." "Well," I said, "I should like to have the property and I think the price is fair, and if I can raise the money, I will take it, and I'll let you know next week." I found the money, and a week later went to him and said I'd buy the property. He turned the corn-cob pipe to the other corner of his mouth as he said, "I've changed my mind, and I reckon I'll keep the lot."

"Why," said I, "you'd better be in a hurry. You know this footstool's not going to last much longer and you want to go before your Heavenly Father free of debt." "Yes," he

THE SECOND ADVENTIST

said, "I did kinder think that way, but now I've changed my mind and want to go before my Maker as a landed proprietor."

FATHER TIME

OLD Father Time, I loved you once, I hate you now. When I was young and foolish, filled with ambition to achieve the things that only you could give, I sought you, was impatient of your slow approach. How often did I pray that Father Time would come and lead me out into the world to achieve great things! 'T was you alone could teach me. You came, but, oh, so slowly creeping toward me like the minute-hand upon the clock that moved so slowly the human eye could not discern its motion. But still you crept, and halted as you came, and led me to the goal I wished to reach. You gave me wealth untold, you led me into pastures I had never dreamed so fair, you gave me love of woman, you gave me all the glories of the earth, and filled me with delight and bade me glutton in the things that God has given. I loved you then. I filled my life with joy, with love. I thought of naught but what I had around me

FATHER TIME

—vigor, strength, youth to enjoy it all. I was happy, but still I wanted more. I longed to possess the world. No man was stronger than I; none had achieved half of what I had—wealth, beauty, love. I had them all and reveled in their possessions, and still I wanted more. I begged that you lead me on to greater joys.

I wanted more; though satiated with all the world could give, I wanted more. And then you led me on to fifty years; the zenith of my hopes, a glorious vision, opened to my gaze. She came and glorified all I had. The woman that God had given me became more beautiful than before. I gloried in her love, and she in mine. We wandered hand in hand, more loving than before; we'd gained the heights, and there could sit and view the hard and rugged road we'd come with Father Time. Then came Father Time again and led me by the hand; I thought, perhaps, to loftier places still. But, no; he led me down the other side. He'd lost his sluggard pace, and now with quickened stride he led me down, nor stopped when I was weary and begged to rest. "Let's

FATHER TIME

stop awhile," I said. "Why go so fast, when you were once so slow?" And then I saw Youth come climbing up. She was most fair to look upon. I stretched out both my arms and drew her to my breast. I asked her for her love. I told her of the wealth I had, of gold I'd give her, jewels rare, bright ribbons I would deck her in, of silken robes, of palaces. I said I'd give her all I had, that queens would envy her. She yielded her slim form to my embrace, she stroked my hair, she smoothed my cheek, she kissed me on the lips. And as we sank down on the soft green turf, the sunlight thrust its rays between the hanging boughs and revealed me as I was. She gave a scream of horror as she saw my face, and springing from my side she cursed me for the deceit I'd tried to play upon her. She stamped her foot and said: "You lied. I thought you young and beautiful. What care I for all your wealth, your palaces, and silken robes? You are Old Age, abhorrent in my eyes; and you almost did possess me. I hate Old Age. I'd rather live in rags with Youth than you, all decked in gold. Begone, Old

FATHER TIME

Age! and henceforth walk in light, that maids may shun you as they shun the night." And as she fluttered from my sight a stalwart youth grasped her in his arms and bore her up the mountain-side.

And I went on with Father Time until we came upon a wicket gate, and there we stopped. Father Time said: "Sit ye down. I've run the dial round. For three score years and ten I've led you by the hand. I've shown you all the world I know. But what's beyond yon wicket gate I cannot tell. 'T is yours to enter in, but not mine; for I the circuit once again must make. Farewell, my son. What joys await you there, beyond, I do not know. Farewell!"

I turned and saw him plodding up the hill and in his arms he held a little child. He slowly plodded on his round again. I felt afraid and called to him to stop. And then I felt a hand creep into mine, and looking up, I saw a radiant face, more beautiful in my eyes than I had ever seen before. The face was wreathed in hair as white as mine. The wrinkles in her face were to me like blushing

FATHER TIME

dimples as she joined her lips to mine and said, "Dear Love, we've reached the gate at last." It was the woman God did give to me. And then she told me how, when I did question her, she had never left my side, and how she'd plodded on, and how the road was often hard; but still she bore up through her faith that we would reach the gate together.

Then, hand in hand, we passed through the gate and found ourselves beside a placid stream that flowed through fields of golden grain. The blue-red sun was melting down behind the hills, and then the golden twilight came. We sank upon the bank, and, clasped in each other's arms, we watched the twilight fade. And then she said: "Who knows, dear Love?—perhaps, before the morning comes, we may pass over yonder where the sun has gone and see more wonders there than we ever dreamed before." And as the darkness came, with mingling breath we said, "Good night, my Love, good night—good night."

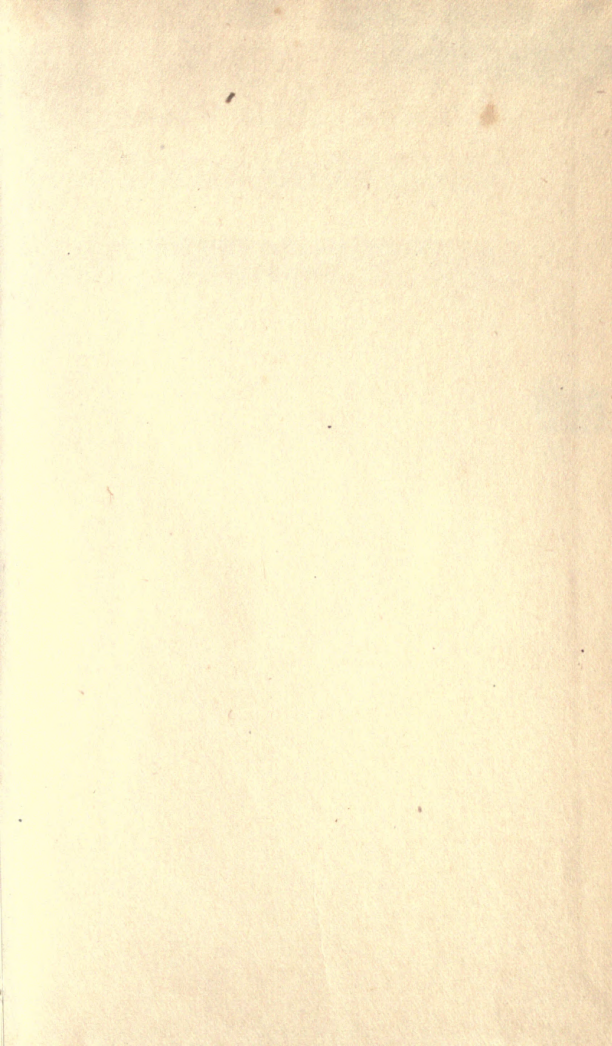
THE GRAIN OF WHEAT

THEN was I threshed out from my mother's arms and thrust into a great dark bin with my brothers and sisters, and there we stayed for moons and moons and waxed strong and plump and hard; and then one day a great big grimy hand clutched me and dashed me upon the ground, where I was harrowed, tossed, and bruised, until I was thrust into my lover's arms,—the earth,—where I sank to his soft moist bosom to be soothed and coddled in his warm embrace; and when, with sobs and sighs of joy, I yielded to his passion, he stabbed me to the heart. I screamed with pain and thought my life had passed; and then his loving breath was joined to mine, and I lay panting in his arms, content. And then I did conceive and put out little roots; and then I grew and grew until my form spread far above the earth, and I felt the sun upon my cheek. The gentle breeze played with my hair and the sweet dew bathed me every morn,

THE GRAIN OF WHEAT

until I grew apace and became more beautiful than all the plants about. And then a golden honey-bee perched upon my ear and whispered of the joy in store for me, and gave me of the pollen he had gathered; and as I clutched it to my breast he told me I should forever be called blessed and from this day bear fruit more precious than bright gold or all the precious stones, and give life and strength to all the world. And then he kissed me once again and said: "Bear fruitfully and yield up all you have to man, God's image. Thou art bread."

THE END



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